



The Real Santa Claus

By SALLY ELLIOTT ALLEN

Characters:

DOTTY, a real little girl.

TOM, a real boy,—almost a big boy.

A LOVE SPRITE, dressed like a cupid or a baby angel.

A FUN SPRITE, dressed like a slip of an elf.

A FAT LITTLE ELF.

THE PEACE ANGEL, in long white draperies and wings.

A LITTLE FAIRY, with a wand.

SANTA CLAUS.

SCENE: The Christmas-tree room in the house of the real little girl and boy.

TIME: The night before Christmas. Betty and Tom have just hung up their stockings.

MUSIC: All the songs will be found in *The Carol*, A Collection of Religious Songs for the Sunday School and the Home, with the exception of the familiar air "I love you truly." Where copies of *The Carol* (now out of print) are not available, four of the songs suggested will be found in *Heart and Voice* (published by the George H. Ellis Co., Boston, \$1.00) and other songs in that book may be substituted for the three that are not found there. "There's a wonderful tree" is in *A Christmas Story*, by Edith Lang, published by the Beacon Press, 15 cents.

The songs outside should be brief, in most cases only four lines. The singing may go on softly to the end, while the children in the play go on with their parts after the four lines, if desirable. The singing may be done by a chorus, as if carols were being sung outside, or by a single voice.

TOM: I borrowed one of mother's to hang up. It holds so much more. Why didn't you?

DOTTY (doubtfully): I was afraid Santa Claus might think it was sort of cheating and wouldn't like it.

TOM: Santa Claus! Pooh! Have you still got that kid notion in your head that someone comes down the chimney to fill your stocking? You're a silly! You know it's just mother and dad.

DOTTY (hotly): No, I don't just know anything of the kind! Of course, I know they help—and Grandma—and Uncle Billy—and the rest. They ask Santa Claus to bring things and they help him, and all, but—

TOM: You know very well that a big, fat man couldn't come down that chimney. Besides, some people don't have any chimneys.

DOTTY: But he's magic. And maybe he doesn't come down the chimney. Maybe that's just a way of saying that no one knows how he gets in. It doesn't matter. There's something or somebody beside just mother and daddy at Christmas time. I know there is.

TOM: How do you know?

DOTTY: I—I—well, everything's so different at Christmas,—so thrilly and wonderful. So—so Christmasy. So Santa Clausy. There!

TOM: Oh, you are a silly! Well, I'm going to bed and to sleep. And if you hear or see Santa Claus, you wake me up, that's all. I bet I don't get waked. Good-night.

DOTTY: Good-night, Tom. (Exit Tom.) I wish Tom didn't think that way. It makes me feel all funny and uncomfortable. Supposing he should be right! I don't care.—I just know there's a Santa Claus. But if I could only just see him once! I've loved him for such years and years. I believe I'll stay here and watch for him! I don't believe he'd mind. I'll try— (She sits down on the couch and sings.)

(Air:—"I love you truly.")

I know a Santa there must be
Because I love him so, you see.
If only he could come to me,
I'd be as good as good can be.

(She slowly droops on to the pillow and goes to sleep. After a moment there tip-toe in:—first, the ANGEL OF PEACE, who holds her palm over the little girl's head; second, the LOVE SPRITE, who kisses her softly; third, the FUN SPRITE and the LITTLE FAT ELF, who sit at the foot of the couch; and fourth, the LITTLE FAIRY, who stands behind her and waves her wand over her.)

ANGEL: Be at rest, little troubled heart.

FAIRY: She's dreaming us.

FAT ELF: Is there any candy on that tree? (The FUN SPRITE turns a somersault.)

ANGEL: Did you hear what she said? About Santa Claus?

ALL: Oh, yes, we heard.

ANGEL: Did you ever see Santa Claus?

ALL: No, did you?

ANGEL (slowly): No, not really, but—but I know a lot about him.

ALL: Oh, so do we!

ANGEL: He's the beautiful spirit of peace on earth.

ALL: Listen! (Outside, a group of voices sings the first stanza of "Peal forth your joyous music.")

FAIRY: Oh, but he's beautiful things—like the red holly berries and the candles on the tree and the shining tinsel and the flowers and the songs—

ALL: Listen! (Singing outside; chorus of "We three Kings of Orient are.")

FAT ELF: Hm! I know about Santa Claus, I do. He's turkey and goose and cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie

and nuts and gravy and candy and things, he is. He's the best dinner of the whole year. He's all sorts of goodies — mmmmmmm! (*Rubbing his fat tummy.*)

ALL: Listen! (*Singing outside; Chorus of "Happy Christmas Day."*)

FUN SPRITE: Oh, but he's games and laughing and just lots of fun, I know.

ALL: Listen! (*Singing outside; first stanza of "God Give Ye Merry Christmastide."*)

LOVE SPRITE: Oh, you're all mistaken. I know. *I know.* He's love—love—love.

ANGEL: But what kind of love, little spirit? Good will to men, you mean?

LOVE SPRITE: All the kinds! Like the angel on the top of the Christmas tree and like the little god of love. Like the Christmas basket,—giving, and like the mistletoe,—kissing. Most of all, like mother's love.

ALL: Listen! (*Singing outside; first stanza of "Cradled All Lowly."*)

ANGEL: Of course, we all know a lot about him. But Dotty didn't seem to think he was a spirit, but just a —a man. Let's ask her. (*She waves her palm and the FAIRY, her wand, and DOTTY wakes and sits up, smiling about at them all, not at all surprised as they come out of her dream.*)

ALL: What do you think Santa Claus is, Dotty?

DOTTY: Why,—why,—he's just Santa Claus, of course. (*Enter SANTA CLAUS, down the chimney, if there's a good chimney about, but all of a sudden, anyhow.*)

SANTA: Of course I am! Just Santa Claus!

ALL (*exclaiming together*): Oh, Santa Claus! Hello! Where did you come from? Dear Santa Claus! (*DOTTY kneels on the couch, her hands clasped in rapture at really seeing him.*)

DOTTY: Oh, is it really you?

SANTA: Well, do I look like anyone else?

ANGEL: But, Santa, we all want to know. Who are you? What are you? A spirit? A saint? A magical man?

SANTA (*laughing*): Everything—or nothing. Whatever you think me—here I am. (*Bowing.*) At your service.

ANGEL: Then you *are* peace?

SANTA: Well, I have had my own troubles arranging it these last few years (*rubbing his hands with satisfaction*). I did it, yes, I did. Good job, too,—peace!

FAT ELF: But you're good things to eat, —mince pie and jelly—

SANTA (*poking him*): And plum pudding! Don't forget the plum pudding!

FUN SPRITE: And laughing and jokes and fun—

SANTA: Never such fun in this world. Hooray! (*Swings him about.*)

FAIRY: And beautiful things,—candles in the window, and starlight on the snow—

SANTA: And most beautiful of all, little children's happy faces. You know all about those, Little Fairy.

LOVE SPRITE: But, Santa, most of all, you're love—love—love—

SANTA: Well, what kind of a sprite are you?

LOVE SPRITE: Sometimes I feel like a Christmas angel—and sometimes like Cupid!

SANTA: That's it! And we do belong together, don't we?

LOVE SPRITE: But, most of all, Santa, fathers' and mothers' love.

SANTA (*nodding*): Most of all.

DOTTY: But, oh, Santa, you do come down the chimney, don't you?

SANTA: Yes, and through the door! And in the windows! And through the cracks! You can't keep me out. Not if you *know* me. If you don't know me, though, I couldn't go down your chimney, not if it were the biggest one ever built.

DOTTY (*distressed*): But Tom—Tom doesn't—

SANTA: Believe in me? Oh, that's different. You don't have to believe in me to *know* me. Tom's all right.

DOTTY: But if he could only see you, like this—so he could know he knew, —couldn't you let him, for my sake?

SANTA (*shaking his head doubtfully*): He wouldn't see me, my dear. Last year, he might have,—not now. You

have to believe in me as well as know me, to see me, you know.

DOTTY (*puzzled*): But how could he help seeing you, when you're *there*? Please, Santa, please.

SANTA: So you think people see all that's *there*, do you? No, no. But try it, my dear, try it if you like. It doesn't bother me, you know. (*DOTTY runs to the door.*)

DOTTY (*calling*): Tom, Tom! (*A grunt answers.*)

DOTTY: Wake up, Tom, Santa Claus is here!

TOM: (*outside*): What you talking 'bout?

DOTTY: Yes, it's really Santa Claus. Come and see for yourself.

TOM (*entering*): Like fun it is. Where? (*Looking around.*) What are you giving us, anyhow?

DOTTY (*pointing*): Why, *there*, Tom. By the Christmas tree. Can't you see?

TOM: I see the tree all right. Guess you've been dreaming, Dot.

ANGEL: He doesn't see me, either.

ALL: Nor any of us!

ANGEL: He'd have to believe us, too, to see us.

FUN SPRITE: He can nearly see me.

FAT ELF: And me! (*These two go up and shout "TOM!" in his ear. He looks around, bewildered.*)

TOM: What did you call me for, Dotty?

DOTTY: Oh, Tom, you funny thing, you can only just barely hear them and you can't see them at all, can you? Dear Santa Claus, can't he ever see you?

SANTA: Maybe, when he's awfully old, and has children of his own, he'll know he knows me then.

DOTTY: Poor Tom! Christmas can't be quite as nice for him until then.

SANTA: You'll stop seeing me, too, one of these days, Dot.

DOTTY: Oh, Santa Claus, what would Christmas be without you?

SANTA: I'm not all there is to Christmas, Dotty, my dear.

ALL: Listen! (*Singing outside; "Oh, Little Town of Bethlehem."*)

DOTTY: Yes, of course, I hadn't forgotten why Christmas was. I hadn't forgotten. But, Santa Claus, I do love you so, too.

ALL (*singing to Santa Claus*): (Air: "There's a wonderful tree.")

Oh, Santa Claus dear, how we love you, we do,
We don't care what others may say about you,
A spirit, a saint, or a man you may be,
It just doesn't matter to children, you see.

Chorus:

Oh,—oh,—Santa Claus dear,
We're—so—glad you are here.
We're always on your side,
At Christmas, at Christmastide:

(Tom looks up in a bewildered way as they begin to sing, and presently DOTTY pulls him to his feet. Then they form a circle and repeat the song, dancing the figure "grand right and left" as they do so, TOM being passed on from one to the other, and dancing as if he did not know what was happening to him. Then DOTTY and SANTA are left in the center and the others dance around as the curtain falls.)

The True Story of Jack and Jill

By FRANCES MARGARET FOX



This summer at Old Mackinaw, two baby robins fell from their nest in a tall tree and no one could put them back in their cradle where they belonged. These nestlings were passed from one house to another until we were asked to save their lives. We named them Jack and Jill because they both fell down, and Jack hurt his crown, even if he didn't break it. Besides, they were a boy and a girl robin. One had a red speckled breast and the other wore a speckled bib that was almost white.

The story of these two birds is short but not too sad. They were hungry enough from the beginning to eat custard from a spoon. It was the kind of custard that Jack Miner feeds to all birds, made with one egg and half a cup of milk. They opened their mouths wide and there was nothing to do but poke in the custard until the two crops were filled.

As soon as the robins could fly they were turned out of doors to stay all day,



"Neither ever ate custard except from a spoon."

although they were called in to sleep in the basement at night. They always came to eat custard when they were called but after a few weeks they decided to sleep in the tops of tall oak trees.

Perhaps if we had known enough to put "vinegar and brown paper" or something like that, on Jack's head, he might have been cured. But his bumped head was never sore, and no one dreamed that his trouble was serious. There was a bruised-looking spot where no feathers grew, where, after a while a lump began to grow.

A little girl came to see the robins after they had been pets for a month. She said she was the one who saw them fall from their high nest and who picked them up. She told us that Jack had struck his head on a stone and that she noticed a spot with the down scraped off, and she was sorry he was hurt.

However, there was no robin doctor in Old Mackinaw and it is a comfort to remember that Jack was happy while he lived. He always came with Jill from the treetops in the early morning when he was called to breakfast. And all day long he and Jill were glad to fly down to talk with their best friends. Both these birds were shy in the presence of strangers. Some pet robins trust all the world because they have been kindly treated by human beings, but Jack and Jill cocked their heads on one side and refused to make up with strangers.

At last, Jack was ill one day. He seemed to have become suddenly blind and he perched quietly on the branch of an apple tree all day long. The next morning he died. When he was found, the lump on his head looked so distressing that the burial was private. A trained nurse who called that day said that she believed that Jack Robin must have suffered from an infection, and that he died when the trouble had reached his brain. Maybe so.

We missed him. So did Jill. She was a perfect young robin. One queer fact about this brother and sister was that neither ever ate custard except from a

spoon. Most robins early learn to eat from a dish. All day long these two dug worms from the garden, but they always asked for custard.

After Jack was gone, Jill, the perfect robin, used to fly to a window-sill for custard. It was her own idea. If she was out of sight, she came flying swiftly to the window when her name was called. Always in the late afternoon, when robins begin to think of bedtime, Jill used to come to the window-sill and talk cheerfully for awhile before she ate her supper custard from a teaspoon, and then said good-night.

One afternoon Jill failed to answer when her name was called. We never saw her again but the neighbors say they saw her flying away with a flock of robins.

If robins will not stay in their nests until they are old enough to take care of themselves, we should all be glad that Mr. Miner discovered that one egg and a half a cup of milk is the proper diet for all growing birds.

And it is great fun to be loved and trusted by young robins.

Fall Frolic

By MADELINE ANNE CHAFFEE

Isn't it nice when the leaves fall down
And you rake them into a heap,
To start to run a long way off,
Then make a mighty leap?

You land all in the crackling mound
And laugh as you climb out,
You grab the rake and pile them high
And run back with a shout!

Then once more you make a dash,
The leaves swirl high around,
Now you're deep in a rustling cave—
It's such a jolly sound!

You do this till darkness comes
And mother calls you in
To wash your hands for dinner
And tell what fun it's been!

THE BEACON CLUB

The Editor's Post Box

Writing a letter for this corner makes you a member of the Club. Address, The Beacon Club, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

OUR PURPOSE: Helpfulness.

OUR MOTTO: Let your light shine.

OUR BADGE: The Beacon Club Button.

Puzzlers

Twisted Names of Authors

1. Tlifgon
2. Fwlognlelo
3. Grsesbu
4. Ttoonske
5. Lnmie
6. Htreiwit
7. Edlif
8. Rosnmee
9. Hrenahwto
10. Bytarn
11. Wollel
12. Evesnostn
13. Vgnrii
14. Proceo

FRANCES TEWKSBURY,
Hingham, Mass.

An Open Square

An open square I ask you to make,
One word of five letters is all you need
to take.

Read up or down, or left or right,
The very same word will come in sight.
It's used for a Mrs. but not a miss,
It's quite a conundrum, I wis.

M. L. C. H.

What Am I?

Take away one of my letters, take
away two of my letters, take away all
of my letters, or just as many as you
like, and I am the same as I was in the
first place.

A. A. K.

Answers to Puzzles in No. 5

Syllable Charade.—Unselfishness.

Twisted Names of Girls.—1. Winifred
2. Marion. 3. Ruth. 4. Shirley. 5. Louise
6. Florence. 7. Helen. 8. Harriet. 9. Ethel
10. Marie.

THE BEACON is published weekly from
the first Sunday of October to the first
Sunday of June, by THE BEACON PRESS
INC., 25 Beacon St., Boston, Mass. Dis-
tributed also at 285 Madison Ave., New
York City; 105 S. Dearborn St., Chicago;
2416 Allston Way, Berkeley, Calif.

Single subscription, 60 cents.

School subscription, 50 cents.

Entered at the Boston Post-Office as
second-class matter. Acceptance for mail-
ing at special rate of postage provided
for in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917,
authorized on September 13, 1913.

Printed in U. S. A.



Kindergarten Class of the Church School at Hopedale, Mass.

This class of twenty-four children
meets at the hour of the church service
and is conducted along the lines of a pub-
lic-school kindergarten. The teacher,
Mrs. C. Hubert Draper, is a trained kin-
dergartner, and her two assistants, Miss
Jennie Draper and Miss Helen Andrew,

are former Sunday-school teachers. The
pianist is Miss Lillian Forster.

At the Children's Day service a few of
the older members of the class received
certificates of graduation into the main
school, new members being received from
the cradle roll.

1109 E. RUSHOLME ST.,
DAVENPORT, IOWA.

Dear Editor: I go to the Unitarian
church and our minister's name is Rever-
end Mr. Krolfifer. I get *The Beacon*
every week and should like to become a
member of the Club. I am in the fifth
grade and am ten years old.

Yours very truly,
SUSAN DECKER.

159 W. CORNING AVE.,
SYRACUSE, N. Y.

Dear Editor: I am nine years old and
am in the sixth grade. I belong to the
Unitarian Sunday School of Syracuse.
My teacher is Miss Frances Morton. My
favorite studies are History and Arith-
metic. I have a sister, Doris. We would
like to join the Beacon Club and wear its
pin. We would like to correspond with
girls of our own age.

Sincerely yours,
JOYCE DE LINE.

233 COMMON ST.,
BELMONT, MASS.

Dear Editor: I belong to the Beacon
Club but have lost my pin. Will you
please send me another?

I go to the Belmont Unitarian church.
Our minister is Rev. H. W. Foote. I am
twelve years old and am in the first year
of Junior High. Won't some girl of
my age please correspond with me?

Your friend,

BARBARA BRETT.

R. F. D. No. 1,
GREENFIELD, MASS.

Dear Editor: I would like to join the
Beacon Club and wear its pin. I go to
the Unitarian Sunday School. My teach-
er's name is Miss Lydia Green and the
minister's name is Rev. Houghton Page.
I am eleven years old and in the sixth
grade.

Yours truly,

LOIS G. SPEAR.